

CIA Officer Tells of Tofte Home Search

By WILLIAM BASHAM
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A Central Intelligence Agency employe has admitted that he took part in a hastily conceived plan to conduct a floor-by-floor search of fellow-agent Hans V. Tofte's former Georgetown home last July to seize classified documents.

The admission, filed late yesterday in U.S. District Court, was submitted by Charles D. Speake, a CIA security officer.

The court papers are part of a civil suit filed last fall by Tofte against agency head Richard Helms, Speake and two others for recovery of a private letter he said also was taken from his home last July 24. The four are being sued as individuals — not as representatives of the government.

Tofte, a veteran agent, was fired last October after the documents were seized. His suit claims that the agents used false pretenses to gain entry to his home. Speake admitted that he "distracted" Tofte's 86-year-old mother-in-law, Mrs. Charlotte Leister, while the search was made.

Helms Quoted

A Republican Congressman, in another development, said that CIA director Richard Helms has admitted it was a "mistake" to search Tofte's home.

Rep. H. R. Gross, R-Iowa, said Helms told him the CIA had

no right to search Tofte's home. The conversation, Gross said, occurred earlier this week but he would not elaborate: "You'll have to take my word for it."

Gross angrily said there is "no reason" why the CIA should not observe the laws that require search warrants. "The question is," he said, "what have we established in this country if some agency of the federal government can invade a man's home and take things... What have we deteriorated to?"

The incident began when agent Kenneth Slocum and his wife, Judy, both defendants in the suit, went to the Tofte home on July 23, to look at a basement apartment advertised for rent. The CIA later said that Slocum accidentally had stumbled upon classified documents on the home's third floor and that he reported this to the agency.

At this point, according to Speake's affidavit, he mentioned Slocum's discovery to his immediate superior, William S. Wilkinson, and another agent, Steven Kuhn, the evening of July 23, at CIA headquarters in Langley, Va.

He said they "generally agreed" on a plan to recover the papers the next day. Tofte's attorney, Byron N. Scott, yesterday asked the court for permission to include Wilkinson and Kuhn as defendants in the civil suit.

On July 24, Speake said, he and the Slocums drove to the Tofte home and found only Mrs. Leister there. He said that while Slocum engaged her in a general conversation, he and Mrs. Slocum "proceeded to look all over the premises."

Speake said they uncovered "a variety of classified documents of various sensitivity and the compromise of which could conceivably jeopardize the best interests of national security."

Stratagem Devised

The security officer said that "rather than announcing the true purpose of our visit to Mrs. Leister, who was a lady of advanced years, I would distract her by talking about the premises while Mr. Slocum retrieved the documents."

As they left, Speake said, he picked up a brief case belonging to Tofte. He said they collected a "substantial number of classified papers, pamphlets, booklets, etc., upon which the classifications, ranging from confidential to secret, were clearly stamped."

The letter involved in the suit reportedly is a communication from Helms to Tofte, written in 1955. It asked Tofte, then a businessman in Mason City, Iowa, to join the agency for a lifetime career. Tofte, who once served with the Danish underground during World War II, was earning \$25,000 a year when he was fired.

Pres. Gross, H. R.

CIA 1-04 Speake, Charles